

VZCZCXYZ0003  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #1945/01 2360907  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 240907Z AUG 07  
FM AIT TAIPEI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6524  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7162  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 8417

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 001945

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - NIDA EMMONS  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

11. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage August 24 on the investigation into the explosion of a China Airlines passenger jet in Okinawa Monday; on President Chen Shui-bian's trip to Central America; and on Taiwan's general economic situation. In addition, two Chinese-language dailies and three English-language dailies all carried an op-ed by AIT Director Stephen Young clarifying the United States' position on the use of ractopamine in pork and urging the Taiwan government to establish a standard for the use of this substance.

12. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-unification "United Daily News" lashed out at President Chen, saying he was merely trying to use the 'bogus Taiwan independence' and 'bogus anti-U.S.' elements in the UN referendum issue to establish his position as a standard-bearer in the Green camp so as to control and manipulate next year's presidential poll and the political situation afterwards. An op-ed in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times," on the other hand, discussed DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh's visit to the United States in July. The articles said Hsieh's Washington visit can be deemed a success, as he "certainly enhanced mutual understanding between Washington and Taipei." End summary.

A) "Genuine Opposition to the United States Is Phony Taiwan Independence!"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (8/24):

"[Activists fighting for] Taiwan independence always strive to vie for support from the United States, so Taiwan independence [activists] cannot possibly be anti-U.S. If someone calls for Taiwan independence verbally but boasts of himself as anti-U.S. and never hesitates to split with the United States, he must be a phony Taiwan independence [activist]. For Chen Shui-bian, he manipulated the 'UN referendum' into an 'anti-U.S.' [move], but both his [calls for] 'Taiwan independence' and 'anti-U.S.' were bogus. Chen merely wants to use the 'bogus Taiwan independence' and 'bogus anti-U.S.' [elements] in the 'UN referendum' issue to establish his position as the standard-bearer in the Green camp so as to control and manipulate [next year's] presidential poll and the political situation afterwards.

"Chen's 'anti-U.S.' [stance] is phony. For example, he appeared to confront the United States sharply when swindling over the 'UN referendum' on the one hand. But on other hand, he was showing goodwill to the United States when it comes to [the policy concerning] the use of beta agonists [in pork], a matter that involves actual trade and economic interests. It is crystal clear that Chen is outwardly fierce but inwardly faint-hearted. In his eyes, the United States could easily do Taiwan a favor without costing it anything by [supporting] the 'UN referendum,' while Taiwan can repay [the United States] with substantive trade and

economic interests [generated by importing U.S.] pork containing beta agonists, [U.S.] beef with the mad-cow disease, and the arms deals. But Chen's scenario fell short because the United States refused to trade. ...

"Judging by the international situation, the United States' influence on Taiwan's survival is, to a certain extent, even greater than the factors concerning the island itself. As a result, Taiwan has never been anti-U.S., and it is least possible for the Taiwan independence [activists] to be anti-U.S. But the United States did not, and will possibly not give Taiwan a political blank check. Taiwan must act in concert with the United States' cross-strait policy; so do Taiwan independence [activists]. Washington's current policy is to 'oppose any change in the status quo,' so it regards the 'UN referendum' as a move 'in attempt to alter the status quo.' Thus, it became out of focus when Chen's 'UN referendum' turned out to be an 'anti-U.S.' movement. ...

"Since 2000, the United States has gradually formulated the doctrine of 'opposing change in the status quo,' marking a new milestone for the cross-strait situation. Beijing's 'Anti-Secession Law,' which drew a red line on 'de jure independence,' can also be viewed as a move akin to tacitly recognizing that the 'Republic of China' is an acceptable part of the 'status quo.' In addition, Chen's 'Four Nos and One Without' was also a pledge that endorsed the doctrine of 'not changing the status quo.' In reality, 'no change in the status quo' is a newborn development following decades of mediations and agitations among Washington, Beijing and Taipei, and can thus be viewed as a new principle prevailing the 'one act [i.e. the Taiwan Relations Act] and three [U.S.-China] communiques.' ...

"Chen is a phony Taiwan independent [activist], and all he wants is to incite and make advantage of the Taiwan independence sentiments. Chen is also a phony anti-U.S. [person], and all he did was to use the anti-U.S. sentiments to stir up and ignite the emotions for Taiwan independence. Chen's objective is to turn next year's

presidential election into a political edict to 'endorse Taiwan independence,' an attempt to ensure that he can still control the situation after he steps down. ..."

#### B) "Hsieh in Washington - an Appraisal"

Li Thian-hok, a freelance commentator based in Pennsylvania, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (8/24):

"... Despite the ambiguities and imperfections, Hsieh's Washington visit can be deemed a success. He certainly enhanced mutual understanding between Washington and Taipei. Overall, he gave the US policy elite a favorable impression as a pragmatic politician who may ease tensions with China and the US. However, caution is in order. The US policy establishment is split on the ultimate status of Taiwan. Some want peaceful unification of Taiwan with China. Others want to preserve Taiwan's freedom until China's future direction becomes clearer, e.g., until the US feels confident that the modernization of the People's Liberation Army is not designed to expel US military forces from East Asia.

"Gaining applause from the pro-China wing as a moderate may only mean that the panda huggers perceive that Hsieh will cooperate with any joint US-China effort to bring about a peaceful annexation of Taiwan by China. Hsieh would be well-advised to renounce Chen's 'four noes' pledge on the grounds that no one, not even the president of Taiwan, has the right to unilaterally abrogate the people's basic right to determine their own future. A democratic Taiwan cannot long endure without evolving into a normal country by changing the national title and adopting a new constitution. The 'four noes' make it impossible for Taiwan to move towards the status of a normal nation without endangering US support for Taiwan's survival.

"Once it is made clear that Taiwan will never compromise on its sovereignty and democracy, those US officials and academics who value democracy and who appreciate the strategic importance of Taiwan as an indispensable link in the security of Japan as well as the US will be encouraged to resist Beijing's pressure to undermine Taiwan's existence as a free and democratic state. An unequivocal

commitment to defend Taiwan's sovereignty and democracy is required if Hsieh wants thousands of Taiwanese-Americans to return home to vote for him next March. Only such commitment will enable Hsieh to fire up his pan green base and persuade light blue voters that only a free and independent Taiwan can ensure their life, liberty and prosperity. To secure his victory, to preserve Taiwan's freedom and stability in East Asia and ultimately to deter a conflict between the US and China, Hsieh has no choice but to stand firm on the right side of history."

YOUNG